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Message Text

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ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 HA-05 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01
INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02
SS-15 USIA-06 AID-05 TRSE-00 OMB-01 /072 W
----------124415 221227Z /11
R 221035Z DEC 77
FM AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5477

C O N F I D E N T I A L MONTEVIDEO 5785

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: SHUM, PINT, UY
SUBJ: HUMAN RIGHTS: COLORADOS DEFY GOVERNMENT; EX-SENATOR
SPEAKS TO LEADERS AT YEAR-END GATHERING

1. IN FIRST SIGNIFICANT PUBLIC ACT BY POLITICAL PARTIES SINCE JORGE BATLLE'S CEMETERY SPEECH IN JULY, 160 LEADERS OF THE COLORADO PARTY ASSEMBLED AT A MONTEVIDEO RESTAURANT DEC. 17 FOR THE PARTY'S TRADITIONAL YEAR-END GATHERING. ANTICIPATING THAT THE GOU WOULD REFUSE THE REQUIRED LEGAL PERMIT FOR THE GATHERING (AS OCCURRED IN 1976) THE COLORADOS DID NOT REQUEST PERMISSION. HOWEVER, THERE WAS NO POLICE INTERFERENCE, OR NOTICEABLE POLICE PRESENCE.

2. THE EVENING'S PRINCIPAL EVENT WAS A CAUTIOUS SPEECH DELIVERED BY EX-SENATOR RAUMAR JUDE, A BATLLE ALLY. JUDE MADE HIS POINTS BY EULOGIZING DEMOCRATIC FREEDOMS, THE AMERICAN EXAMPLE, AND THE CARTER HUMAN RIGHTS POLICY, MIXED WITH REFERENCES TO URUGUAY'S PROUD TRADITIONS. HE ALSO HAD GOOD WORDS FOR THE BLANCO PARTY, WHILE ESCHEWING ALL BUT THE MOST INDIRECT CRITICISM OF THE GOU.

3. COMMENT. BY COINCIDENCE, BATLLE, JUDE, AND AMILCAR VASCONCELLOS (THE PARTY'S THREE MOST ACTIVE LEADERS) HAD VISITED THE EMBASSY AT THEIR REQUEST FOR A LENGTHY DISCUSSION
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WITH THE AMBASSADOR TWO DAYS PREVIOUSLY. IN THE CURRENT SUPER-HEATED ATMOSPHERE OF SUSPICION, THIS MEETING WAS APPARENTLY DEEPLY DISTURBING TO SOME GOU ELEMENTS AND, ACCORDING TO BATLLE, THE GOU SERIOUSLY CONSIDERED ARRESTING ALL THREE PROSCRIBED LEADERS FOR ENGAGING IN PROHIBITED POLITICAL ACTIVITY (INSTITUTIONAL ACT 4). ALTHOUGH NO ACTION WAS TAKEN EITHER IMMEDIATELY OR DURING THE INTERVENING PERIOD, IT IS

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ENTIRELY POSSIBLE THAT THE GOU WILL STILL TAKE SOME REPRISALS EITHER AGAINST THE THREE LEADERS OR, AS WAS DONE AFTER THE CEMETERY SPEECH, AGAINST THEIR PRINCIPAL LIEUTENANTS. AT THAT TIME, NOT ONLY WERE THE STIPENDS OF A NUMBER OF FORMER LEGISLATORS REDUCED, BUT OTHER INDIVIDUALS WERE FIRED FROM GOVERNMENT OR TEACHING POSTS.

4. WHEREAS THE BATLLE SPEECH WAS DELIBERATELY PASSED TO GOU OFFICIALS AND TO THE WIRE SERVICES, THE COLORADOS ARE NOT NOW INCLINED TO MAKE JUDE'S REMARKS AVAILABLE BEYOND PARTY LEADERSHIP CIRCLES. HOWEVER, MIMEOGRAPHED COPIES ARE ALREADY IN CIRCULATION, AND IT IS LIKELY THAT, INTENTIONALLY OR NOT, THEY WILL BE SPREAD WIDELY.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: HUMAN RIGHTS, POLITICAL PARTIES, PARTY MEETINGS
Control Number: n/a
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Sent Date: 22-Dec-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977MONTEV05785
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
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Line Count: 76
Litigation Code IDs:
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Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
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Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
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Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 147169
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: HUMAN RIGHTS: COLORADOS DEFY GOVERNMENT; EX-SENATOR SPEAKS TO LEADERS AT YEAR-END GATHERING
TAGS: SHUM, PINT, UY
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkvgwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/901449fe-c188-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
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